

## PUBLIC HUNT MEETING COMMENTS

### Flagstaff: 11 in attendance – June 5, 2007

#### Deer

Consider reducing season length on archery deer down to 1-2 days before you permit archery deer hunting opportunity.

Shorten the reporting time for mandatory archery deer and implement an archery harvest quota rather than permit opportunity.

I support the proposal to permit archery deer hunts in some units. I believe it is a good idea.

If you implement an archery deer permitted season in some units, I am concerned that this concept will expand statewide in a very short time.

Regardless of what you do with archery deer opportunity, do not allow archers to hunt deer in Unit 13B. It is nice to have one unit in the state where archers don't have the first opportunity for deer.

#### Elk

If you establish a November hunt in addition to September hunts, you should allocate antlerless permits during the November hunt to avoid overlap with bull hunts.

#### Turkey

Allocate a proportion of the permits to juniors (like the 5% you suggest), but do not offer over the counter juniors only opportunity in the spring.

#### Javelina

I am opposed to any fall javelina hunting.

#### Bighorn sheep

Be careful about micromanaging bighorn sheep when you subdivide units. Hunters, rather than the Department, should determine what is a harvestable ram.

#### Bear

Provide general season hunts during the month of September. August is too hot and in October most bears have left the prickly pear areas.

Predator-furbearer

You should manage for fewer predators in some areas to benefit prey species.

General

I am concerned that your proposals will drive a good management system downhill by managing for reduced buck to doe and bull to cow ratios, along with your other proposals.

You should limit "primitive" hunts in some areas to truly primitive archery and muzzleloader hunts.

There is already lots of opportunity to hunt in Arizona, but everyone wants to hunt in "their" unit and are unwilling to apply in the areas where there are more tags.

**Pinetop, 12 in attendance – June 5, 2007**

Deer

Unit 30B white-tailed deer usually has leftover tags, why it is going into alternative management?

Unit 27 is already less than 20% of the harvest going to archers, can we bring back the December archery hunt?

It is good to see some restrictions and regulation on archery deer harvest.

Permitted archery deer hunts should have rut hunt opportunity.

If 20% harvest is trigger for permitting archery deer hunts, should there be a lower limit of demand and/or harvest (i.e. 15%). Concern over too few archery deer permits through the draw.

Leave white-tailed deer permits at 90:10 early:late hunts.

I don't like managing for lower hunt success and lower buck:doe ratios. Don't want to sacrifice hunt quality and hunt experience for opportunity

Unit 13B deer would be very vulnerable during early fall archery hunts since they would be tied to water.

I am concerned that you may run white-tailed deer into the ground with early hunts.

### Elk

Be very careful with limited opportunity over the counter elk hunts; there are private property and access issues. Also keep sportsmen's expectations in mind relative to harvest and hunt success. Be aware of land owner impacts and coordinate through HPC process.

There is no measure on age for alternative elk management, just antler points. Consider cementum aging in alternative management units.

How are we to increase elk herds according to Commission direction while providing more opportunity? That seems like a contradiction.

General late bull hunts seem to keep creeping later and later. Now they overlap with sheep hunts which make it impossible for outfitters to book both types of hunts. This is also a potential conflict in Unit 27 where sheep and elk hunters may be hunting same areas.

### Turkey

Unlimited juniors spring turkey would have impact on general spring turkey hunts. Fall juniors over the counter is OK, but not spring.

Increase junior spring turkey to 10% on top of what we already have (additive).

Support shotgun only spring and fall turkey.

### Javelina

OTC archery javelina in metro areas will put us all on television news with bad press.

Fifty percent of all general javelina permits should go to juniors.

Juniors javelina should focus on the units in southeastern Arizona where there are always leftover tags.

Javelina herd size of 7-9 is too low and so is the juvenile:adult ratio.

### Bighorn sheep

I am concerned about the decline of the sheep in Unit 45B and the number of rams.

Department should have aggressive monitoring action on large predators and ram numbers.

### Buffalo

I am concerned that year long pressure on House Rock herd would keep buffalo on Grand Canyon National Park all year.

Get the Park Service to allow hunting on their lands.

Population Management Hunts should not be for bulls.

Year round buffalo hunts would have an impact on the auction tag holder and the amount of money that it raises.

#### General

Consider the long term effects on population when lowering male to female ratios.

I am concerned that the Commission direction will be add permits to hunt recommendations to hit lower end of guidelines.

Timing of the post-draw survey was bad and created bias and the questions were directed towards the end result.

Use hard data to look at how many people are "trophy" hunters by how many actually put in for those hunts.

Doesn't the Department collect field ages on harvested critters? Use that data.

#### **Tucson: 14 in attendance – June 6, 2007**

##### Deer

Offer three hunts in for deer in Units 21 and 22 instead of the current two.

Offering four white-tailed deer hunts in southeastern Arizona is too many.

I like the 4-day white-tailed deer hunts, why make them longer?

Has harvest increased since we went from 4- to 6-day hunts?

All deer should be physically checked by the Department.

Deer hunters should have to choose their weapon and should not be allowed to participate in multiple seasons.

You could expand archery hunts in the northern part of the state to relieve pressure on the southern part.

I am opposed to the reduction of December white-tailed deer hunting opportunity from 10 to 5%.

Clarify the statement in the proposed hunt guidelines about 30% of the white-tailed deer permits will be in the December hunt for Alternative units.

I would rather see no alternative white-tailed deer units designated, keep the current approach.

Over crowding is really discouraging, especially for new or young hunters.

I like cool weather and a chance to shoot a mature buck.

### Elk

Why are you recommending a reduction in the target bull to cow ratio guideline? Are you considering the fact that the department has said you have less elk than your target population on a statewide basis?

Demand for elk in Arizona is high because of the high quality of the bulls harvested. By increasing opportunity you may compromise quality.

### Turkey

Fall hunt success ranges from 13-30% and is variable year to year. Shotgun-only regulation will only result in buckshot wounding birds and I'd rather not have a hunt at all. Retain rifles for the fall hunts.

I disagree with the previous statement about needing rifles in fall turkey hunt; I can get in bow range in the fall turkey hunt.

How many states with turkey seasons allow rifles in the fall?

Start spring turkey the Friday after New Mexico's opener.

Eliminate the second stratified spring season.

Junior turkey hunt this year was great. Good to be there without other hunters in the field.

Appreciate the current hunt structure with the combined hunt for those who were not successful during weeks one and two. "It feeds my soul."

### Bear

Consider offering the archery bear hunt into September again so we can hunt them on prickly pears.

### Tree Squirrels

Start tree squirrel season one week later so there is no overlap with the opener of fall turkey (opening weekend conflicts).

### General-Multi Species

Have you considered using antler point restrictions?

This recent trend in maximizing opportunity is taking us backwards. Too much focus on lower hunt success rates.

### Rules

Consider a waiting period in which you cannot apply for a couple of years after being drawn.

Establish a harvest quota for archery deer that closes when the harvest objective is met.

### **Prescott: 5 in attendance – June 6, 2007**

#### Deer

I like juniors-only hunts, but I don't believe that they should be offered trophy hunts.

I like that the Department offers juniors-only hunts that coincide with school holidays.

#### Elk

Try to offer the highest quality archery hunts with fewest hunters in the field; I am willing to wait to hunt.

#### Turkey

I like shotgun shooting shot for both spring and fall seasons. You shouldn't hunt turkeys with a rifle.

#### Javelina

Consider offering over the counter javelina tags in under subscribed or remote units.

#### Buffalo

I like the proposed yearlong structure for buffalo on House Rock Wildlife Area.

#### Black Bear

Consider offering a portion of the fall bear season (1-2 weeks) when hounds are not allowed prior to a season when hounds could be used to hunt bears.

#### Small Game

Start quail hunt later in October (a week or two) because season is often too hot and too many young birds.

#### Other

Start an aggressive predator control program.

Promote predator hunting in news releases and public outreach.

#### **Sierra Vista: 11 in attendance – June 7, 2007**

##### Deer

The Alternative Management Guidelines for white-tailed deer is a good idea.

Consider offering a draw whereby a junior could get both a deer and javelina permit together (same time and place in single draw).

The December hunt time frame should be reserved for those that draw a general season permit. I don't want to compete with archers during this time frame. Archery bull elk hunters didn't want archery deer hunters in the field with them, and I don't want them in the field disturbing deer during my hunt.

##### Pronghorn

The early draw for elk and pronghorn was a great idea.

##### Elk

I like the proposed over the counter tags for some limited opportunity elk hunts.

Consider offering hunts for elk that force people to hunt areas with difficult access, such as a wilderness area hunt in the Blue Wilderness.

The early draw for elk and pronghorn was a great idea.

Turkey

I like the proposed guidelines giving over the counter tags to juniors.

I like the proposed limited weapon shotgun shooting shot fall season.

Javelina

Consider offering all left over permits to juniors.

Consider offering a draw whereby a junior could get both a deer and javelina permit together (same time and place in single draw).

Small Game

I like the proposal for extended squirrel season dates.

General

The agency needs to think about how to deal with the disappointment that many juniors will have when they are no longer juniors and then find it difficult to draw a tag.

Acquisition of land and conservation easements are important aspects of wildlife management in Arizona.

I appreciate the Department holding these public input meetings in Sierra Vista.

Rules

Change the law and rule so that any tag holder can donate a tag to a junior, not only a parent or grandparent.

**Safford: 14 in attendance, June 7, 2007**

Deer

I like the mule deer and white-tailed deer hunts separated, but that would mean 5 hunts in this area. That may be too much constant pressure without a break for the animals.

Keep Unit 32 with the same hunt structure as it is.

I dislike the current hunt structure in Unit 32 because currently you have juniors hunters in the field with white-tailed deer hunters (1 weekend overlap).



### Elk

Let elk eat the underbrush to reduce the fuel loads on the mountain. Increase elk herds in southeastern Arizona for more hunter opportunity.

Use over the counter opportunity and not fiddle around with only a few tags here and there.

### Javelina

Eliminate the fall javelina hunts. Javelina are not as active in the fall. In January they are more active during the day and that is better for juniors.

Why can't archery javelina hunters have all of January again? Offer all of January for archers and then give juniors two weeks in February.

Increase the juniors-only tags in that late January and early February hunt; shift opportunity from hunts with unused tags.

### Turkey

Not many juniors can shoot a shotgun so eliminating rifles as an option for fall turkey will hurt juniors. Allow juniors to use any weapon for fall turkey.

### Small Game

Why can't we have fixed-date standard seasons for all small game? For example: October 1 – February 1 (Mearns' quail could still be later for biological reasons).

Are dove numbers good enough to have afternoons for all hunters? Afternoons in the early hunt would increase the number of dove hunters because people could hunt after work.

I like the idea of extending the Abert squirrel seasons year-round in Units 31 and 33.

I like the proposed squirrel season extension statewide.

Remove the bag limit for Abert squirrel in Units 31 and 33.

### General-Multi-Species

Allow year round hunting of all predator species.

Has the Department taken under consideration the effects of Forest Service road management planning?

I am opposed to decrease in buck to doe and bull to cow ratio guidelines. We should be using habitat improvement projects. I want to see a quality hunt not quantity.

Junior hunt for all species should be before the general seasons.

How has the border issues affected application rate for the border units south of I-10?

The Department should continue to be an information conduit to inform public about resource issues (such as things happening on USFS land).

### **Phoenix: 36 in attendance – June 18, 2007**

#### Deer

You should include the parameters for determining archery hunt demand in the guidelines package.

You should show the actual archery harvest from each Unit in your presentation because some Units only have a few total deer harvested, and just a few archery harvests could represent 20% of the over-all harvest.

You should enforce the mandatory check out requirement for archery deer hunters and then use the mandatory check data rather than questionnaire data for managing archery deer harvest because questionnaire data are not all that reliable.

If archery harvest is low in a unit, you should expand archery deer hunting opportunity.

Unit 42 is included among the units with greater than 20% of the overall harvest coming from archers. I believe that most of the archery harvest in Unit 42 comes from the White Tanks. Rifle hunters can't hunt the White Tanks, so archers are not limiting rifle opportunity. You should not consider White Tanks archery kills in the overall Unit 42 calculation when determining the percent of overall harvest represented by archers in Unit 42.

You should have mandatory harvest reporting for all deer harvest.

The allocation of archery opportunity between over the counter and draw will be self perpetuating because you will just adjust the number of tags based on demand to keep the harvest level where it needs to be.

I feel that retention of hunters is based more on success than on the opportunity to go.

If you make archery deer a draw, it will push hunters out of state.

The general permits that will be generated as a result of the reduction in archery deer harvest should go to junior-only hunters rather than just to general hunt opportunity

You should keep archery deer over-the-counter statewide, and use harvest quotas by Unit to manage harvest.

You should look at the raw number of deer killed by archers, not just the % of over-all harvest achieved by archers.

You have a coordinator for archery in the schools program that is doing a great job getting lots of kids into shooting bows, but the Department has not created an avenue to take the kids directly from the archery in the schools program into hunting. The Department needs to create that nexus so that archery in the schools becomes a direct pipeline to create new archery hunters.

### Elk

You should consider having late archery hunts not just in November, but December and January also. I don't see how you can fit archery elk hunts into your calendar in November without overlapping different hunts.

Don't mess with September archery bull hunts. They are the best in the country, and Arizona is known worldwide for these hunts.

You should make the new late archery bull hunts available to youth only.

You need to make sure there are no other hunts overlapping early rifle bull hunts. Last year we had an early bull tag that opened at the same time as a 150 permit junior deer hunt and a bear hunt. The guys who draw that tag have waited 15 years and should be able to have their day in the field.

If you are not selling all of your tags for limited opportunity elk hunts, you should raise the bag limit on elk.

You should increase the number of archery antlerless elk tags during the rut.

You should spread out muzzleloader elk hunt opportunity to more units because it is not offered in enough places (example, most of the tags in the state were in Unit 6A last year).

### Turkey

Increase both adult and youth tags through the draw

### Buffalo

You should offer an archery-only buffalo hunt

### Quail

Your seasons are already too long. You should not extend the closing date any later than it currently is because I am seeing quail starting to pair up in February.

### Predator-furbearer

The season dates for mountain lion, bobcat, and fox do not match. You should coordinate the season dates for all three of those animals to make it easier for people to understand.

### General

You should standardize youth-junior definitions and standards so that the definition of youth is the same no matter what you are applying for (whether buying a license or applying for a youth hunt).

## **Mesa: 18 in attendance – June 18, 2007**

### Deer

Thank you for no Labor Day opener for archery deer.

Open above the rim units for late archery deer structure. With the USFS road closures it will offer a wilderness hunting experience.

The stratified deer hunts are great.

You will need a reverse process for removing permitted archery deer units when the harvest goes below 20% for archers.

Increase the juniors-only buck deer allocation to >5%.

Increase the number of units for juniors-only buck hunting (e.g., include Unit 34A).

Wait for two more years for permitting any archery hunts so you can have better data.

I would prefer an archery quota strategy than a permitted archery hunt.

Increase season length for archery in units with less than 20% of the harvest coming from archers.

Extend (lengthen) permitted archery deer seasons.

For Unit 42, do not consider the archery harvest from the White Tanks (an archery only hunt area) as part of the 20% of harvest criteria for determining this unit to go to a permitted archery hunt.

Consider Units 24B and 33 as alternative white-tailed deer management units.

Will permitted archery deer hunts be changed back to over the counter the following year after harvest drops below 20% for archers?

Reduce archery season lengths in units with archery harvest >20% instead of permitting these units.

Limit archery season days to reduce harvest.

I do not like permitted archery deer hunts at all.

Consider keeping December archery deer hunts.

I am not in favor of wider bull:cow ratio or buck:doe ratio.

#### Elk

I am not in favor of moving early archery elk permits to November.

Increase juniors-only cow hunts to 10%.

Use a post hunt survey to look at quality and demand for November archery bull hunts.

Make sure there is no overlap of juniors deer and bull elk hunts.

I like the wider bull:cow ratio, it may reduce antler breaking.

Use archery elk structure proposed for a couple years before put in allocation pie.

I am not in favor of wider bull:cow ratio or buck:doe ratio.

#### Javelina

Go back to over the counter archery javelina.

Include all of January for archery javelina and allow overlap of juniors javelina hunt.

#### Lion

Do not close the lion season for three months.

Predator-furbearer

Emphasize predator hunting with small game hunting outreach and camps.

Allow bonus points for killing predators.

General

I like the emphasis on turkey and javelina junior hunts.

Email these hunt guidelines to the public.

Great presentation, I wish more of the public was here.

Consider mandatory harvest for all hunts.

Consider choosing by only one weapon type in the draw.

I want quality not quantity hunts.

Consider the biological aspect along with hunter demand.

Applaud no overlap on archery elk and archery deer.

New guidelines are not simple (e.g., archery deer proposal is contrary to Commission direction).

Offer more primitive weapon hunts to reduce harvest and allow more people in the field.

**Yuma: 15 in attendance – June 20, 2007**

Deer

The Department and Commission should have increased hunter opportunity when we really had a lot of deer if you wanted to increase hunters in Arizona.

Lowering buck to doe ratios will result in a lower quality buck harvest.

In units with low total deer harvest, the 20% limit on archery harvest should not apply.

Consider using antler point restrictions to reduce harvest of young deer, which will reduce the overall harvest of deer, increase hunter opportunity, and increase buck quality.

Manage harvest by archery hunters by implementing a quota system similar to what you have on bears.

Don't restrict archer harvest until you have more reliable data.

#### Elk

Maximizing opportunity while land management agencies are proposing restricted access for vehicles and camping is a bad idea.

I like the proposal to offer over the counter limited opportunity elk hunts, especially since this does not affect my bonus points.

#### Bighorn Sheep

I support the new bighorn sheep guidelines.

#### Small Game

I like the quail season extension proposal.

#### General

There should be mandatory harvest reporting for all harvests.

Bureau of Land Management and US Forest Service proposed restrictions on motorized access for game retrieval will negatively impact hunter retention.

### **Kingman: 16 in attendance – June 20, 2007**

#### Deer

I support the proposed archery deer hunt structure.

I don't support the proposed archery deer hunt structure.

I am concerned that anti-hunters will feel they have achieved success by reducing archery deer seasons.

#### Elk

I am concerned that over-the-counter elk tags will create an enforcement issue because anyone with an over the counter tag could harvest an elk in any unit and claim it was taken in a limited opportunity unit.

Turkey

You should not issued juniors over-the-counter tags, but a conservative increase in spring juniors turkey tags would be appropriate.

I support the proposed switch to shotgun only for fall turkey.

Bighorn Sheep

All bighorn sheep hunters should have to attend a mandatory hunter clinic for successful applicants.

General Comments

There should be mandatory harvest reporting for all hunters.

Publish regulations with number of available non-resident tags.

Ensure all juniors seasons have two weekends.

Don't shorten seasons anymore.

Archers have enough time already, focus on general seasons.

**Page: 15 in attendance – June 21, 2007**

Deer

Nonresidents are over using the resource.

I like that the permitted archery deer season proposal will limit nonresident participation in the units north of the Colorado River.

The guidelines indicate that juniors deer and fall turkey hunts will overlap (starting Friday of week 41). This should not be the case.

Elk

November archery elk hunts are acceptable if you have some time between the general-muzzleloader hunts and the archery hunts. I don't want to hunt elk while others are hunting camp sites and scouting.



### Turkey

The guidelines indicate that juniors deer and fall turkey hunts will overlap (starting Friday of week 41). This should not be the case.

Juniors deer and over the counter juniors turkey season dates should overlap.

If juniors deer and over the counter juniors turkey seasons overlapped, would you foresee any safety issues?

### Bighorn Sheep

There are a number of volunteers in this area that would be willing to assist with supplemental ground surveys for bighorn sheep. We have pictures and video and this data could increase the number of permits you could offer in Unit 12B.

Offer more sheep permits in Unit 12B.

There are more lambs in Unit 12B this year than I have ever seen before (approaching 80:100).

### Buffalo

I like the buffalo season proposal on House Rock Wildlife Area.

Quit offering population management permits to deer hunters in Unit 12A.

### General

We've sent four comments to the "Send Comments" section and we have not received any response.

Offer a cheaper license that a person could purchase if they only wanted to hunt small game.

### **Payson: 7 in attendance – June 21, 2007**

#### Deer

You should manage for more big bucks at the Kaibab, and maybe consider antler point restrictions, because I hunted it in 2006 and didn't see any big bucks.

I like the fact that you are proposing to eliminate December archery deer in units where archery success exceeds 20%.

I am not in favor of lowering the buck:doe ratios anymore, as I believe you already have very low buck:doe ratios, based on my observations.

I prefer that you manage for quality deer hunt opportunity as opposed to quantity.

#### Elk

I had a late Kaibab deer tag and I saw that somebody killed an elk near Sowats.

#### Javelina

Archers are becoming more and more effective. You should shorten your archery javelina hunts to 10 days, and stratify them (offer two or three 10-day hunts instead of offering one 30 day season)

#### General

You should draw the full amount from credit cards when people apply, instead of just the application fee. If you don't withdraw the full amount, more people can afford to apply, and it reduces the draw odds.

I think you should add to your hunter questionnaire. I believe you should add a section that asks the respondent to rank the quality of his or her hunting experience (i.e. not just did you kill an animal, but how did you enjoy your hunting experience, and if it was poor, why.